

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MADRID NIACT IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING TEL SENT ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS NOUAKCHOTT  
SALT TWO FROM SECSTATE 15 OCTOBER REPEATED

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL  
EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING  
OCTOBER 15, 1973:

QUOTE: Q. SOME OF US HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT PUZZLED BY A  
STATEMENT THAT PRESIDENT NIXON MADE THIS MORNING ABOUT THE  
ROLE OF THE U.S. BEING THAT OF A PEACEMAKER, AND HE HARKED  
BACK FOR HIS ANALOGIES TO THE SITUATION IN LEBANON IN 1958  
AND IN JORDAN IN 1970. AND, SUBJECT TO A NUMBER OF INTER-  
PRETATIONS, COULD YOU GIVE US ANY MORE GUIDANCE ON THAT?

A. WELL, I HAVE ONLY JUST HAD THE QUICKEST OPPORTUNITY TO  
LOOK AT THE TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS, AFTER HAVING  
SEEN ONE NEWS-AGENCY ACCOUNT, AND I THINK IT NEEDS TO BE  
EMPHASIZED THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS SPEAKING ABOUT A BROAD  
POLICY OBJECTIVE OF THE UNITED STATES -- WHICH HAS BEEN PUT  
DOWN HERE IN THE SECOND PART OF HIS REMARKS -- AND NOT ABOUT  
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A SPECIFIC TACTIC IN THE AREA, SUCH AS MIGHT HAVE BEEN

ILLUSTRATED BY ONE OF THE SITUATIONS TO WHICH HE REFERRED.

I NOTE, FOR EXAMPLE, THIS LONG SENTENCE:

"BUT THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES IS THAT OF PEACEMAKER  
IN THE AREA."

HE WENT ON FROM THAT TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE MEN WHO WERE  
THERE FOR DECORATION WITH MEDAL OF HONOR AWARDS.

AT ANOTHER POINT HE SAYS:

"WE STAND FOR THE RIGHT OF EVERY NATION IN THE MIDEAST TO  
MAINTAIN ITS INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY. WE WANT THIS  
FIGHTING TO END. WE WANT THE FIGHTING TO END ON A BASIS  
WHERE WE CAN BUILD A LASTING PEACE."

SO I'D SUGGEST THAT ANY FAIR INTERPRETATION OF THE FULL  
CONTENT OF HIS REMARKS NEEDS TO BE LOOKED AT LESS WITH  
REGARD TO A SPECIFIC TACTIC THAN WITH A BROADER OVERALL  
OBJECTIVE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US SOMETHING NEW ABOUT THE RESUPPLY OF  
ISRAEL, THE SITUATION? HAVE THE PLANES BEGUN TO MOVE, OR  
WHAT?

A. I SUPPOSE I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT THE SOVIET AIRLIFT  
HAS CONTINUED AT AN INCREASED PACE, BOTH WITH RESPECT TO  
THE NUMBER OF FLIGHTS AND THE TONNAGE OF EQUIPMENT  
DELIVERED. IN OUR OWN CASE WE WATCHED AND WAITED OVER  
THIS SITUATION FOR SEVERAL DAYS, PURSUING THE OBJECTIVE OF  
ACHIEVING A DIPLOMATIC ARRANGEMENT THAT WOULD BRING AN END  
TO THE FIGHTING, WE HAVE BEGUN SOME RESUPPLY OF ISRAEL;  
AND, TO AN APPRECIABLE EXTENT, THIS IS DESIGNED ALSO TO  
PREVENT THIS MASSIVE AIRLIFT BY THE SOVIETS FROM UNSETTL-  
ING THE MILITARY BALANCE IN THE AREA.

I WANT TO AGAIN SAY THAT WE WILL CONTINUE OUR DIPLOMATIC  
EFFORTS IN THE BILATERAL CHANNELS, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.  
I WISH IT WERE POSSIBLE TO REPORT SUCCESS; I CANNOT DO  
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THAT. WE HAVE NOT, HOWEVER, GIVEN UP THE EFFORT. THE  
DIPLOMATIC CHANNEL IS STILL ALIVE AND WE CONTINUE TO HOPE  
THAT IT WILL PROVE FRUITFUL AND A WAY WILL BE FOUND TO  
BRING THE FIGHTING IN THE AREA TO AN END.

SINCE I'VE GONE THAT FAR, LET ME SAY THAT THE SECRETARY  
HAS MAINTAINED CONTACT THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND WITH A  
NUMBER OF THE GOVERNMENTS, BOTH INVOLVED IN THE FIGHTING

AND OTHERWISE INTERESTED IN ITS OUTCOME -- INCLUDING  
AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN HERE IN WASHINGTON.

I KNOW OF NO SCHEDULE THAT WOULD OPEN THE SECURITY COUNCIL THIS AFTERNOON, OR TODAY AT ANY TIME, IN NEW YORK; BUT THAT, OF COURSE, COULD CHANGE, AND I'D ADVISE YOU -- AS ALWAYS -- TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH NEW YORK.

Q. ARE WE NOW SATISFIED THAT WE NOW KNOW WHAT THE SOVIET MASSIVE AIRLIFT CONTAINS AND IS BRINGING?

A. TO SOME EXTENT WE DO, BUT I DON'T THINK THAT WE COULD CLAIM TO KNOW EVERYTHING THAT IS CONTAINED IN THE AIRLIFT.

I WOULD SAY ROUGHLY 4,000 TONS OF EQUIPMENT, AND SOMETHING ON THE MAGNITUDE OF 280 FLIGHTS, INVOLVING DIFFERENT AIRCRAFT.

Q. THE SECRETARY, ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, HAS SAID THAT ANY DETERIORATION OF THIS SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST MIGHT AFFECT DETENTE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION. AND YOU MENTIONED THE BROADER ISSUES. DOES THE SECRETARY BELIEVE THAT THIS AIRLIFT AND SOVIET ACTIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE SPIRIT OF DETENTE?

A. I JUST WOULDN'T WANT TO ANSWER THAT DIRECTLY, GIVEN WHAT I'VE ALREADY SAID ABOUT BROADER ISSUES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION WHICH WE CLEARLY WOULD WANT TO SEE PRESERVED AND WOULD THINK THAT THEY HAD A MUTUAL INTEREST IN SEEING THOSE PRINCIPLES PRESERVED. AND I SAID THAT I'M JUST NOT GOING TO OFFER ANY COSMIC JUDGMENT IN LIGHT OF THE PRESENT SITUATION AND RIGHT AT  
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THIS TIME.

Q. IS THE GOAL OF THE AMERICAN RESUPPLY TO RE-ESTABLISH THE MILITARY BALANCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. IN LARGE MEASURE, YES.

Q. CAN YOU GIVE US SOME SORT OF BASIS TO HOW, WHAT LEVEL, THE RESUPPLYING IS GOING ON? ARE WE TALKING ABOUT PLANES AGAIN?

A. I AM NOT IN A POSITION WHERE I CAN ITEMIZE THE MATERIEL INVOLVED, AND I'LL JUST HAVE TO LEAVE IT AT THAT.  
END QUOTE.

SEPTTEL FOLLOWS GIVING TEXT PRESIDENT NIXON'S REMARKS. KISSINGER  
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